

New memorial honors slain police

By Harry Harris
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A permanent memorial for 39 Oakland Police officers who were slain in the line of duty was unveiled here yesterday as more than 100 police officers, community leaders and the late officers' relatives looked on.

The service coincided with the start of National Police Memorial Week.

Chief of Police George T. Hart said the memorial was a "fitting tribute to our brothers and our friends," who deserve everyone's gratitude and respect "because they've done all that was

ever asked and far more."

The memorial contains a brief message and the names of the officers and the dates they died, sandblasted into the dark granite lobby wall in 1 1/4-inch letters that were filled in with white acrylic paint. An 11-inch silver plated replica of an Oakland police badge tops the memorial.

The memorial, which cost \$5,700, was Lt. John Regan's idea. Before yesterday's unveiling, the only memorial was a display of the slain officers' badges in a corner cabinet near the building's auditorium.

The first name inscribed on the memorial is Richard Richardson, appointed in 1867 as the city's first regular officer. He died in October of that year when he was killed by a squatter in an argument over land claims. The last name is that of Chesley A. Stephens, killed by a

suspected drug dealer last November.

Lt. Bob Muszar, president of the Oakland Police Officers Association, said the most appropriate honor he and other officers could bestow on "our fallen comrades is a continued commitment to our profession."

"To my fellow officers," Muszar said, "let these 39 men remind you of your commitment and the ultimate price you may pay."

Mayor Lionel Wilson paid tribute not only to the slain police but to current officers.

"No civilization can exist," he said, "without men and women who bravely day in and day out walk and ride the streets of our city extending efforts to protect others."

"I hope the time will come when there will be no additions to this monument."